



Jimmy Carter Library & Museum **News Release**

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For Immediate Release

Date: August 11, 2004

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Release: NEWS04-07

Peace Corps Volunteer Describes Life in an African Village

Author of Nine Hills to Nambonkaha featured at Reception and Public Reading

ATLANTA, GA. - The fascinating story of bringing modern health care to an African village where illness was blamed on sorcery and witchcraft will be recounted at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum. That was the challenge facing Peace Corps volunteer Sarah Erdman when she traveled to the North Ivory Coast village of Nambonkaha.

Erdman will read excerpts from her highly praised book, **Nine Hills to Nambonkah**, autograph copies and discuss her Peace Corps experience at a free public reading Friday, August 20, 2004. There will be reception for Ms. Erdman at 7 p.m., followed by the reading at 8 p.m.

The *New York Times* called **Nine Hills to Nambonkaha** “wonderful” adding “Erdman’s irrepressibility lifts you along.” *Publishers Weekly* described the book as “an engrossing, well-told tale certain to appeal to armchair travelers.”

The child of career Foreign Service employees, Erdman said it seemed natural for her to join the Peace Corps. “What appealed to me about the Peace Corps,” she said in an interview with John Coyne, “was the idea that I would be living at the level of the community.” In her role as a health-care worker and instructor, Erdman faced the difficult task of introducing medical knowledge into a society where magic and evil spirits were the tradition. She tells how she learned the local customs and slowly gained the confidence and friendship of the villagers with prose that *Booklist* described as “graceful” and “thoughtful.”

Abraham Verghese, author of *My Own Country*, said “It is rare to pick up a book and be so completely transported to another land, another culture. The village of Nambonkaha comes alive in Erdman’s hands.”

The event is free and open to the public. The reading is a presentation of the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, the Chattahoochee Review, the Georgia Center for the Book and the Peace Corps.